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January 17, 2002

Attorney General John Ashcroft
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

Dear Mr. Ashcroft,

I'm writing to encourage you to support the recent settlement Microsoft has reached with the United States Justice Department. Microsoft has agreed to settlement terms that will not only allow itself to return to the business of developing innovative software, but it will also make the software industry much more competitive.

Microsoft has, for example, agreed to grant computer makers and software developers broad new rights to configure Windows to remove or disable Microsoft products and promote non-Microsoft products, such as Netscape Navigator, AOL Instant Messenger, or RealNetworks' RealAudio. Microsoft has also agreed to not retaliate against companies who choose to do this, nor will Microsoft retaliate against computer makers who ship operating systems that compete with Microsoft.

Microsoft has further agreed to not enter into any contract that will obligate third parties to exclusively or in a fixed percentage distribute or promote Windows.

These terms will result in a much more level playing field that allows smaller, developing software companies to compete and mature. For these reasons, I encourage you to support the recent settlement.

As a late Computer User – started some 12 years ago at age 70 – I find the Microsoft Products invaluable for development of my computer skills – a company that proves its excellence by being the leader of Product Development in the Computer Industry should not be haggled to such a great extent by the Government, States, and opportunistic lawyers.

Sincerely,

John K. Jouett
Lt. Col. USA Retired